Claims

What is claimed is:

5   1.   A method of synchronizing data in a multi-user computer network,
comprising:

        accessing a record from a database for a first user;

        accessing the record from the database for a second user;

        requesting a first change to the record by the first user;

10   receiving an authorization to make the first change to the record; and

        making the first change to the record accessible to the second user.

     2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the database is stored on a hard disk operating
under control of a network server.

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     3.   The method of claim 2 wherein the step of requesting the first change to the
record is made to the network server.

     4.   The method of claim 3 wherein the authorization for the first change to the

20   record is made by the network server.

     5.   The method of claim 4 wherein the step of making the first change to the
record available to the second user is executed by the network server.

25   6.   The method of claim 1 wherein the first user operates a first workstation
running application software which utilizes the record and the second user operates a
second workstation running application software which utilizes the record.

     7.   The method of claim 6 wherein the application software running on the second

30   workstation executes using the first change to the record.

     8.   The method of claim 1 further including:

requesting a second change to the record by the second user;

receiving an authorization to make the second change to the record; and

making the second change to the record available to the first user.

5   9.   A method of synchronizing data in a multi-user computer network, comprising:

accessing a record from a database for a first user;

making a first change to the record;

processing the first change to the record through a controller of the database;

10   and

making the first change to the record accessible to a second user.

10.   The method of claim 9 further including the step of accessing the record from the database for a second user.

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11.   The method of claim 10 wherein the database is stored on a hard disk operating under control of a network server.

12.   The method of claim 11 wherein the step of requesting the first change to the

20   record is made to the network server.

13.   The method of claim 12 wherein the authorization for the first change to the record is made by the network server.

25   14.   The method of claim 13 wherein the step of making the first change to the record accessible to a second user is executed by the network server.

15.   The method of claim 10 wherein the first user operates a first workstation running application software which utilizes the record and the second user operates a

30   second workstation running application software which utilizes the record.

16.   The method of claim 15 wherein the application software running on the

second workstation executes using the first change to the record.

17. The method of claim 10 further including:

requesting a second change to the record by the second user;

5   receiving an authorization to make the second change to the record; and

making the second change to the record available to the first user.

18. A multi-user computer system, comprising:

means for accessing a record from a database for a first user;

10   means for accessing the record from the database for a second user;

means for requesting a first change to the record by the first user;

means for receiving an authorization to make the first change to the record;
and

means for making the first change to the record available to the second user.

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19. The multi-user computer system of claim 18 further including:

a network server controlling the database;

a first workstation coupled to the network server and running application
software which utilizes the record; and

20   a second workstation coupled to the network server and running application
software which utilizes the record.

20. The multi-user computer system of claim 19 wherein the application software
running on the second workstation executes with the first change to the record upon

25   receiving the first change to the record.

21. The multi-user computer system of claim 18 further including:

means for requesting a second change to the record by the second user;

means for receiving an authorization to make the second change to the record;

30   and

means for making the second change to the record available to the first user.

22.   A method of utilizing data in a multi-user computer system, comprising:

accessing a record from a database to perform a first function on a first network node;

accessing the record from the database to perform a second function on a

5   second network node;

processing a first change to the record on the first network node; and

making the first change to the record accessible to the second network node.

23.   The method of claim 22 wherein the database is stored on a hard disk

10   operating under control of a network server.

24.   The method of claim 23 wherein the authorization for the first change to the record is made by the network server.

15   25.   The method of claim 24 wherein the step of making the first change to the record accessible to the second network node is executed by the network server.

26.   The method of claim 22 wherein the first workstation runs application software which utilizes the record and the second network node runs application

20   software which utilizes the record.

27.   The method of claim 26 wherein the application software running on the second network node to execute using the first change to the record.

25   28.   The method of claim 22 wherein the first and second functions involve bidding and estimation on a construction project.